

I have been a licensed amateur for 12 years as a Technician class operator. For the first six years I was very active in VHF and UHF but became “bored” for a lack of a better word with my operating privileges. I was never intimidated by the written examinations for General or higher, but was very much so for the code requirements. It was for this reason that I never pursued my license to higher classification. This resulted in about a 6 year hiatus from the ham radio hobby. It wasn’t until the disasters of hurricane Katrina and Rita that ignited a fire in me again to pick up the radio and begin to operate. After reading the proposal that the FCC made in dropping the morse code requirements, I was motivated in moving forward with my license upgrades. I just completed the general written examination and passed with flying colors a few weeks ago. I am even interested in going on to pass the extra written as well. I am acting in faith, especially after taking the written exam, that the FCC will hear my voice as well as others when it comes to dropping the code requirements for amateurs who really want to move up in the ranks of ham radio. In closing I would like to make this comment. I lived in Baton Rouge, Louisiana for 23 years of my life. Four years ago I moved to Atlanta, GA to pursue a job opportunity. It saddened me to see such images on TV of the total devastation that these hurricanes inflicted on the Gulf coast, my home. Having no vacation time to leave work and return home to assist in recovery efforts, ect, I only wish I could have helped contribute in some way by providing necessary HF communications during those times where it was needed the most. I even recall the ARRL posting messages begging for amateurs to help out in providing emergency communications because there didn’t seem to be enough help to go around. If only I had the HF privileges that come with a General or Extra class license, I would have been there at their cries for help.